

## Prayer for the State of Michigan

(On the occasion of Opening the Session of the House – 12 March 2014)

We pray to you, O Almighty and Eternal God! You are our creator, and rule over the destinies of all peoples and powers. As the psalmist says, in proclaiming the belief of all the children of Abraham: “The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Ps. 24:1). We pray to you with our minds and hearts lifted up to you, who alone are good and holy, the source of all that is good and true and right. You are our Father, our ever-merciful and all-gracious Father.

We come before you vividly aware of how much needs to be done to strengthen in the State of Michigan the fabric of our community through works of solidarity, and we know that achieving our aspirations is only possible with your merciful help. We lift up to you, O God our Father, all those who are in need in our State: the hungry and the homeless, those without work, those who look toward tomorrow with anxiety and despair. Send them help, O Lord, and send us the means to be their help and the resolve to offer it.

We are mindful that through the Apostle Paul you have directed us to pray for our leaders, for he wrote to Timothy to “urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for rulers and everyone who has authority over us, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way” (1 Tm 2:1-2). And in his Letter to the Romans the Apostle he taught that “there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God” (Rm. 13:1).

So, Lord God, taught by your word, and according to your sovereign will, we fervently intercede on behalf of all who govern our State. We pray for the Governor and the members of his administration; we pray for our judges; and in this place at this hour we pray especially for those who frame our laws.

May all that the members of this House do advance the preservation of peace, the promotion of happiness, the increase of industry, sobriety, and useful knowledge; and in all matters may they perpetuate to us the blessing of equal liberty.

“We, the People” have given this authority to them as a sacred trust. We have, as a free people, designated them to be your agents as stewards of your creation. Our well-being depends on their discharging of this trust with wisdom and courage, justice and compassion. Pour out these virtues upon them in abundance.

In order to full their grave responsibilities to protect and advance our common good, they must have your help, Lord God. Theirs is a heavy burden, and for this stewardship you will one day demand an accounting. Our legislators are willing to bear this burden for the sake of us and our loved one. How could we not pray for them with the full measure of our hearts' ardor in order to ask you to guide and sustain them? We beg you to help and direct them unfailingly so that their tenure in political service will be renowned for encouraging due respect for virtue and religion, for framing laws in justice and mercy; for restraining vice and immorality, and for building up everything that gives life to the common good.

Give the members of this House light, O Lord, light to comprehend the nature of the challenges we face and light to understand the wisest and surest way to meet them. Give them courage to take up these daunting tasks, which fall to them, according to the dispositions of your all-good Providence. Give them the virtue of solidarity, that sure and unwavering commitment to act for the common good, and not for one's own personal gain or advantage, so that, with your help, all the citizens of this State may build for the next generation a society that is true to your plan for the human family, a society of justice, peace and prosperity.

Above all, O Lord, give the gifts of right judgment and self-sacrificing service to all in this House so that they may rightly guide and shape the various spheres of our civic life, especially education, the ecology, commerce, public safety and health care. May they never fail to see that in all their decisions you call them to widen the scope of our freedoms, to secure the well-being of families, to protect the strangers in our midst, to advance the flourishing of the whole civil society, and – above all and in all – to preserve the authentic and irreducible dignity of every human life from conception to natural death. Let them know the right and give them the courage to do the right.

O Lord God Our Father, we give you thank you for your love for us, the people of Michigan. We thank you that you have given us this land to be our home, a place whose beauty we recognize every time we look around us. We thank you that you have made us a free people, drawn from every race and language and creed in the world, living in mutual respect and cooperation. We bless your name for our religious liberty and praise you that in our exercise of this liberty we have been able to do our part to make our state and our nation a greater and freer people, a light of liberty to the world.

Lord God: bless Michigan, bless America. Lord God, keep us free.